

Remarks

Claims 1-11 and 13-24 were pending in the application. Claims 1-11 and 13-24 were rejected. No claims were merely objected to and no claims were allowed. By the foregoing amendment, claim 22 is canceled, claim 1 is amended, and no claims are added. No new matter is presented.

Interview Summary

In a January 3, 2007 telephone interview between the undersigned and Examiner John C. Hong, the Advisory Action was discussed. Although the examiner indicated that claim 13 (which had been represented at claim 25) had not previously been the subject of a rejection, he indicated a separate invention was involved. Accordingly, it was agreed to re-present the foregoing amendments without the added claims and leaving claim 13 in dependent form. This has been done. It was agreed that such amendment would place the claims in condition for allowance.

The remarks below are essentially repeats from the amendment filed October 2, 2006 but edited to reflect the lack of adding claim 26 and placing claim 13 in independent form as claim 25.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter in claim 22 subject to addressing of 112(2) rejections discussed below. The subject matter of claim 22 has been incorporated into claim 1 with wording believed to address any 112(2) concerns as noted below.

Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. 112

Claim 22 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112(2). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The rejection was twofold. First, it was asserted that the limitation “the applying places...” was “vague and ambiguous, since it is unclear as to which area of the component the first portion should be applied.” Office action, page 2. A wording specific to a particular implementation of a leading edge repair was proposed. Applicants assert that it is unnecessary to be so limiting.

Second, the claim was asserted as incomplete for lacking further relationship between the recited first face portions. the claim is believed complete as-was. However, the foregoing amendment provides further connection. Specifically, claim 1 further relates the first face of the backing element to the damage site.

Claim Rejections-35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 1-3, 6-11, 14-16, 19-21, and 23-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C 103(a) as being unpatentable over Neal et al. (US2002/076573) in view of Carl, Jr. et al. (US6754955).

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The copper chill plate of Carl, Jr. et al. was asserted as being the presently-claimed backing element. However, there is no teaching that this plate is applied to the component or that the material builds up on the base surface and this component. FIG. 4 of Carl, Jr. et al. clearly shows this component spaced apart from the weld build-up material 30. This does not appear to be an exploded view because the surface 32 is shown as irregular whereas the adjacent surface of the chill plate 26 is clearly straight (in section). The chill plate may, for example, be positioned to block adjacent airfoils from splatter.

The Office action contrasted the phrase “applying...to” with alternatives of “securing...” and “attaching”. It then asserted the Carl, Jr. et al. chill plate as being applied “adjacent to the damaged area.” Office action, page 10. Adjacent to the damaged area is not applied to the component. There is clearly no illustrated contact. The assertion of forming “a molding surface” is similarly belied by the drawings of Carl, Jr. et al. as is noted above.

Claim 24 clearly further distinguishes the situation wherein the backing element receives only splatter as opposed to a body of the material being built-up spanning the backing element and substrate. The asserted inherency is wrong and unsupported and clearly in conflict with FIG. 4 of Carl, Jr. et al.

Claims 17 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C 103(a) as being unpatentable over Neal et al. and Carl, Jr. et al. in view of the Movchan article. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection for the same reasons as in the underlying Neal et al. in view of Carl, Jr. et al. rejection.

Claims 1-10, 19-21, 23, and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Pratt et al. (US5038014) in view of Carl, Jr. et al. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection for the same reasons as in the Neal et al. in view of Carl, Jr. et al. rejection.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 1-11, 13-21, 23, and 24 are in condition for allowance. Please charge any fees or deficiency or credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account of record.

Respectfully submitted,

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